(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, whether action will be taken to protect the dam and the unauthorised diversion of water, if any, from the Mullaperiyar Dam?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESORUCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (d) As reported by the Government of Tamil Nadu, there is no unauthorised diversion of water from the Periyar reservoir of Mullaperiyar Dam through Erachipalam. As per the inter-State agreement between Tamil Nadu and Kerala, Tamil Nadu is entitled to divert and use all the waters from the Periyar reservoir. Before the construction of the Hydro Power House, the water from Periyar reservoir was drawn through natural river course via Erachipalam. After the Construction of the Power House and Forebay dam, the water is being drawn through penstock pipes. However, whenever Power House is temporarily shut down, the water diverted through natural river course through a bye pass provided in the Forebay dam via, Erachipalam. The Mullaperiyar Dam is owned by the Government of Tamil Nadu and the maintenance of the dam is the responsibility of the State Government. The Government of Tamil Nadu has reported that there is no leakage found in the dam.

River linking Project

300. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) what is the present status of the river linking project to solve the drinking water problem of millions of people in the country;

(b) whether there is any proposal to divert the rivers of Western Ghats to eastern direction; and

(c) whether there is any proposal to declare rivers of Western Ghats as cultural heritage?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) National Water Development Agency (NWDA) based on water balance and prefeasibility studies carried out by it, has identified 30 links (14 under Himalayan component) and 16 under Peninsular Component) for preparation of feasibility reports (FRs).

FRs for 11 link project (2 under Himalayan component and 9 under Peninsular Component) have been completed by NWDA so far. The Government under its Common Minimum Programme envisages for a comprehensive assessment of the feasibility of linking of the rivers of the country.

(b) There are three link proposals under Peninsular component of National Perspective Plan (NPP) envisaging diversion of water from west flowing rivers to eastern direction:

1. Pamba-Achankovil-Vaippar link
2. Netravati-Hemavati link
3. Bedti-Varada link.

(c) No such proposal is under consideration of this Ministry.

Water Management Policy

†301. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of WATER RESORUCES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of measures taken by Government in view of constantly growing problem of potable water; and

(b) whether Government are contemplating to formulate any appropriate policy in respect of water management?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESORUCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (d) Water being a State subject, water resoruces schemes including schemes for drinking water supply are planned, formulated and implemented by the State Government out of their own resources. However, to supplement the efforts of the State Government, the Government of India provides technical & financial assistance to the States under the Centrally Sponsored Accelerated Rural Water Supply and Accelerated Urban Water Supply Programmes.

National Water Policy, 2002 provides first priority to the Drinking Water in the planning and operation of systems. Further, the Policy envisages that adequate safe drinking water facilities should be provided to the entire population both in urban and in rural areas and irrigation and

† Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.